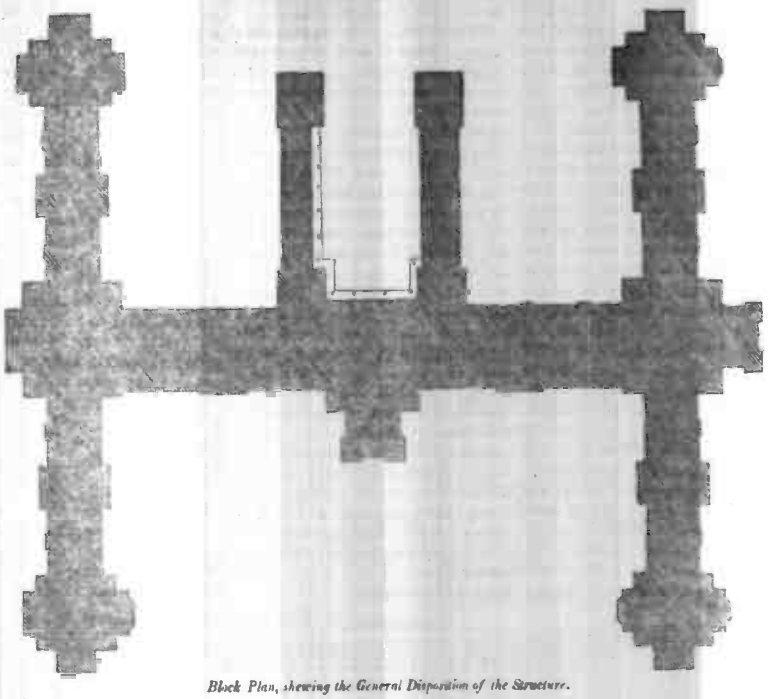
INFANT ORPHAN ASYLUM.



Block Plan, shewing the General Disposition of the Structure.

This building is designed for the accommodation of four hundred children, but at present contains not more than some hundred and sixty. There are thousands, unfortunately, thousands of candidates, poor orphan children! but even the number for which this building is framed cannot be provided for, unless by the generosity of a large number of subscribers. It is not for us to essay an appeal to the hearts and sympathies of the public; we should but bunglingly discharge such a duty; and last Tuesday the matter was advocated by a distinguished pleader, the Rev. Mr. Dale. We cannot, however, forbear indulging for a moment in seconding his exertions, and calling upon all our friends of the building class, and out of the building class, to exercise that God-like liberality which this occasion gives the scope for.

We are not afraid that this institution will not be nobly supported. The building which our engraving presents to view is a type of the high purpose by which men are to be animated, and of the high impulses to which they yield on such a subject. How frequently do we hear of niggard virtue—but how shall we apply such term to that virtue of benevolence? It is a liberal and a regal virtue, and seeks, as in buildings like to this, for adequate and correct expression.

Upwards of 30,000*l.* have been expended on the structure, and yet much remains to be done in fittings and furnishing, but this only as the inmates increase in numbers. The situation chosen is a lovely and a favoured one.

Wanstead Common, although so near to London, bears all the primitive charms for which it has ever been characterized, and a chance spot has been hit upon with trees and shrubs peculiar to the Common, and yet so as to appear to welcome this pile of well-affected ancestry as a thing of growth or founding coeval with themselves. The mixed Tudor and Stuart in the mode or style of building is carried out with the accustomed skill of the architects, and it would be hard to describe how much is owing to the good taste exercised in the selection of the materials. White brick, we believe, was intended in the original or first provisions of the contract, but the walls have been very wisely constructed of limestone facings, hammer dressed, from the quarries of Sneaton, near Whitby. This, which is so largely effective in raising the exterior character of the building, was accomplished at a cost of little more than 1,000*l.*, but the use of Caen and of Bath and Whitby stone, for the dressings of the windows, for quoins, plinths, cornices, &c., swelled the whole extra amount to upwards of 3,000*l.* The first point, however, is a marvellous one to make note of, that with sea freights from Sneaton to London, coming up the Thames, and the carriage from the Thames to Wanstead overland, not more than a little over 1,000*l.*, should have been expended in so large a work for the exterior walling. We would have our readers judge for themselves as to the superiority of character which the adoption of this material has secured; it reflects great credit on Messrs. Scott and Moffatt to have hit upon and carried out so successful an expedient.

We have not hitherto brought the names of these gentlemen forward in what we have had to say regarding this edifice. With our professional and builder readers their names will be familiar, and great numbers of the non-professional have become acquainted with the works of these gentlemen, particularly in union workhouses, and latterly in churches, foremost among which we may mention Camberwell New Church now erecting, and we may add the Martyr Memorial at Oxford. Their indefatigable industry and talent, unquestionable evidences of which are given in the work before us, have entitled them to considerable reward and employment, and of late there is scarcely a competition of a certain class in which they have not been the successful candidates. This matter of the Infant Orphan Asylum was so contested in the year 1841, and the palm awarded to those gentlemen. Mr. Jay, of London Wall, was the contractor, and the work commenced about the autumn of the same year, without, however, much more than the foundations being put in till the spring of the year following. Great progress was made thenceforward, as will be judged of by the building being at this present time in occupation, and so prepared for some time past. It may be a question, however, whether the building had been, as we say, sufficiently seasoned for the reception of its juvenile inmates. We thought, when we looked over it, that the effects of a little precipitancy in this respect were marked upon the countenances of some of the children. This, however, might arise from other causes, or be altogether unavoidable in the change from the comparatively wretched previous provision of three or four accommodation houses at Dalston, or from a change in the water, a point, by the way, to which we would venture to recommend particular attention. There is a lake, or sheet of water, in the rear, or out from the right wing of the building, which, as part of the landscape, is particularly pleasing and effective; but we question whether it will not be found that its quality is deteriorated, or that it possesses a certain rawness which unfits it for culinary and other purposes of diet, derived from its peat-like sources or tributary channels. This is a matter deserving of grave attention, and we do not mention it without being impressed ourselves with the importance of calling that of the authorities to it.

This consideration brings us again to that part of the subject which is more particularly allied to the household than to the house, to the interesting little inmates, and that charity

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